

Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 CU-04 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00

PA-03 RSC-01 USIA-12 PRS-01 SS-15 VO-03 SCA-01 SR-02

ORM-03 IO-12 RSR-01 /083 W
----- 009253

R 230835 Z MAY 73

FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON

TO AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU

INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 2050

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E. O. 11652: N/ A

TAGS: PINT VS

SUBJECT: COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY INVITES MRS NGO BA THANH TO LECTURE

KATHMANDU FOR AMBASSADOR BUNKER

1. MRS. NGO BA THANH' S FAMILY TOLD AN EMBASSY OFFICER MAY 22 THAT SHE HAS RECEIVED A LETTER FROM MICHAEL I. SOVERN DEAN OF THE COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF LAW INVITING HER TO LECTURE AT A SPECIAL SEMINAR AT COLUMBIA FROM JUNE 10 TO JUNE 29. (MRS THANH RECEIVED A MASTER' S DEGREE IN COMPARATIVE LAW FROM COLUMBIA) THE FAMILY RECEIVED THE LETTER DATED MAY 9 LATE LAST WEEK AND TOOK IT TO HER AT THE POLICE HOSPITAL. THEY SAID THEY WILL GIVE THE EMBASSY A COPY OF HER REPLY. THEY ALSO SAID THE DEAN WROTE THAT HE WOULD CORRESPOND DIRECTLY WITH THE EMBASSY CONCERNING THE INVITATION.
(THE EMBASSY HAS THUS FAR NOT RECEIVED ANYTHING FROM HIM.)

2. MRS THANH' S HUSBAND AND YOUNGEST DAUGHTER VOICE HOPE THAT THIS INVITATION WOULD SOMEHOW PROVIDE AN OPPORTUNITY TO RESOLVE HER CASE AND PERHAPS LEAD TO HER RELEASE FROM CUSTODY.

3. THEY WERE OBVIOUSLY WORRIED BY STATEMENTS WHICH GVN SPOKES-
MAN BUI BAO TRUC HAS MADE DURING THE PAST TEN DAYS. IN WHICH HE
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HAS SAID THE GVN NOW HAS PROOF OF MRS THANH' S CLOSE LIAISON WITH THE COMMUNISTS AND THAT THE GVN HAS DECIDED TO RELEASE HER TO THE COMMUNISTS. WHILE ADMITTING THAT TRUC' S STATEMENTS DO NOT NECESSARILY REFLECT THE GVN' S FINAL DECISION, THEY SAID THAT HOANG DUC NHA (FOR WHOM TRUC WORKS) IS A POWERFUL MAN WHO COULD HAVE A DETERMINING INFLUENCE ON THE FINAL DECISION. THE FAMILY STATED THAT MRS THANH WILL NOT REPEAT NOT REQUEST CHIEU HOI STATUS IF THE GVN CLASSIFIED HER AS A COMMUNIST OFFENDER AND DECIDES TO TURN HER OVER TO THE OTHER SIDE.

4. MRS THANH' S HUSBAND INDICATED THAT HE IS SATISFIED WITH THE MEDICAL ATTENTION SHE IS RECEIVING AT THE POLICE HOSPITAL. HE SAID THE STAFF PHYSICIANS DISCUSS HER CONDITION AND TREATMENT OPENLY WITH HIM. HE NOTED THAT HER HUNGER STRIKE IS NOW IN ITS SIXTH WEEK AND THAT SHE HAS LOST 20 KILOGRAMS SINCE SHE ENTERED PRISON ALMOST TWO YEARS AGO. ACCORDING TO HIM THE POLICE HOSPITAL PHYSICIANS HAVE EXPRESSED CONCERN THAT IF THE HUNGER STRIKE CONTINUES " MUCH LONGER" IT WILL SOON BEGIN TO CAUSE SERIOUS AND IRREVERSIBLE DAMAGE TO HER HEALTH. ONE RESULT WILL BE CHRONIC ANEMIA. MRS THANH HAS TOLD HER FAMILY THAT SHE WILL " EAT AT HOME," HOWEVER SUGGESTING THAT HER DETERMINATION TO CONTINUE HER FAST IS UNDAUNTED.
WHITEHOUSE

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*** Current Classification *** LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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